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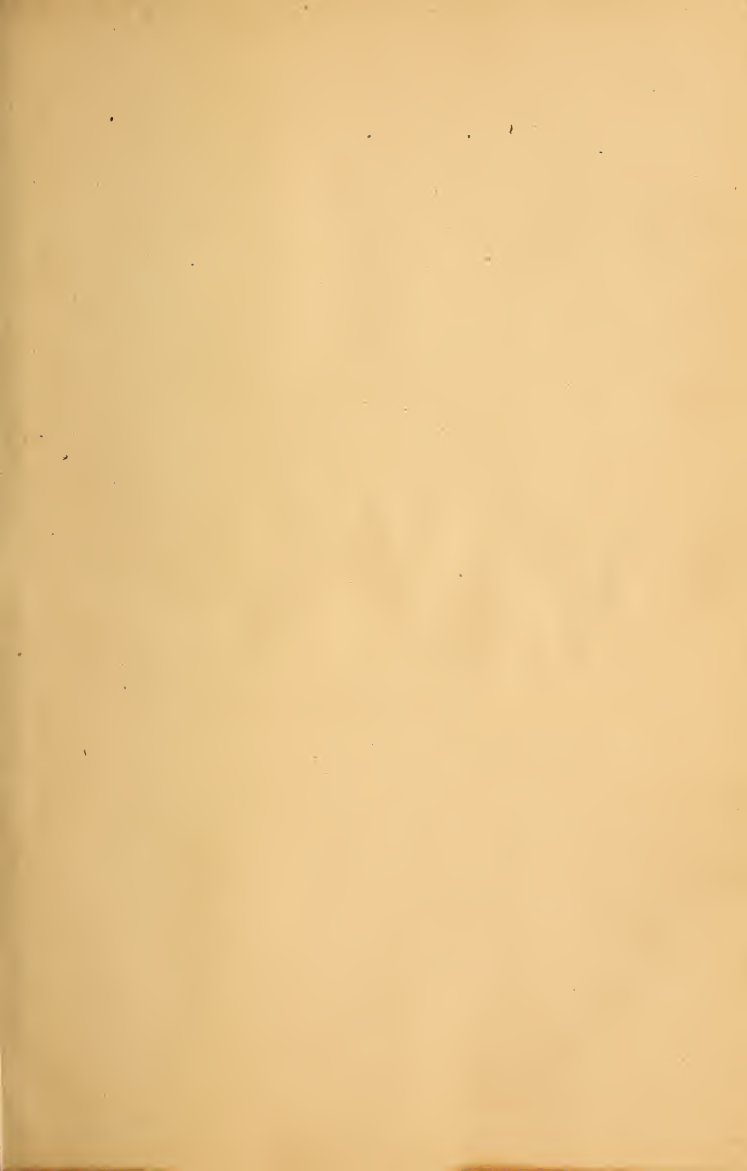
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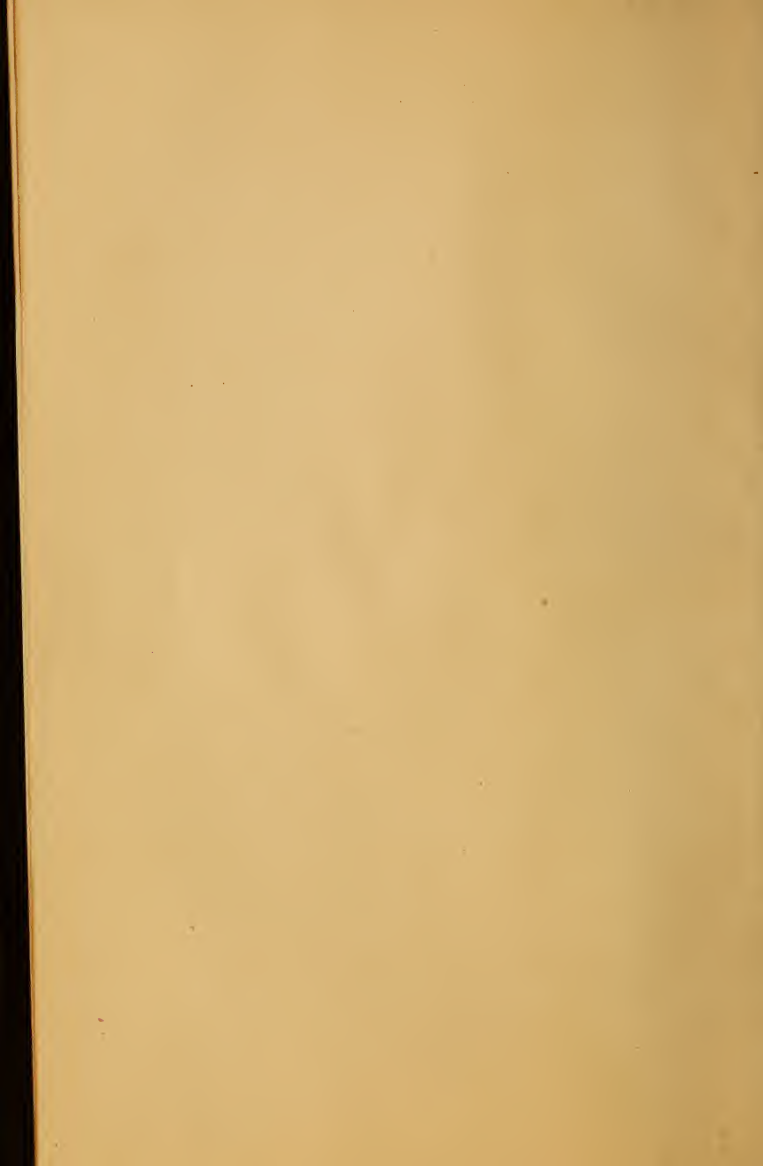
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CHILDREN'S SPEAKER



THE DE WITT PUBLISHING HOUSE: NEW YORK.

Juvenile Series. Issued monthly. Subscription price, \$1.20 per year. Vol. 1. No. 7.
October 1, 1892. Entered at New York Post Office as second-class matter.

CHILDREN'S SPEAKER.

Short Pieces Suitable for Recitation by Children
from Four to Eight Years of Age, including
well selected Pieces for Special and
Holiday Occasions.



NEW YORK:

THE DE WITT PUBLISHING HOUSE.

No. 33 Rose Street.

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CHILDREN'S SPEAKER.

SUPPOSE THE LITTLE COWSLIP.

Suppose the little cowslip
Should hang its golden cup,
And say, "I'm such a tiny flower,
I'd better not grow up!"
How many a weary traveler
Would miss its fragrant smell!
How many a child would grieve
To lose it from the dell!

Suppose the glistening dewdrop
Upon the grass should say,
"What can a little dewdrop do?
I'd better roll away!"
The blade on which it rested,
Before the day was done,
Without a drop to moisten it
Would wither in the sun.

How many deeds of kindness
A little child can do,
Although it has but little strength,

And little wisdom too !
It wants a loving spirit
Much more than strength, to prove
How many things a child can do
For others, by its love.

THE LITTLE EQUESTRIANS.

Said little Tom to Baby Dick,
"I'll tell you what we'll do :
We'll mount upon old Oscar's back—
I know he'll carry two."

Cried Baby Dick, "Then come along,
I never heard such fun ;"
And putting on their garden hats
They both began to run.

Old Oscar lay upon the grass,
And watched the little men ;
"I really do believe," he thought,
"They want a ride again !"

The heroes climbed upon his back,
Their courage did not fail ;
Tom held him by his shaggy ear,
And Baby by his tail.

"Gee up!" cries Tom; "Come on!" says Dick,
And coaxed him with a will;
"I cannot get our horse to move—
What makes him lie so still?"

Then Oscar rose upon his feet,
And turned him quickly round,
And little Tom and Baby Dick
Lay sprawling on the ground!

THE SELF-WILLED PIG.

It happened one day, as the other pigs tell,
In the course of their walk they drew near
to a well,
So wide and so deep, with so smooth a wall
round,
That a pig tumbling in was sure to be
drowned.

But a perverse little brother, foolish as ever,
Still boasting himself very cunning and
clever,
Now made up his mind that whatever befell,
He would run on before and jump over the
well.

Then away he ran off to one side of the well,
Climbed up on the wall, slipped, and head-
long he fell,
And now from the bottom his pitiful shout
Was, "Oh, mother! I'm in: pray do help
me out!"

She ran to the side when she heard his
complaint,
And she then saw him struggling, weakly
and faint,
Yet no help could she give!" "My children,"
cried she,
"How often I've feared a sad end his would
be!"

"Oh, mother, dear mother!" the drowning
pig cried,
"I see all this comes of my folly and pride!"
He could not speak more, but he sank down
and died,
While his mother and brothers wept round
the well-side!

DOT'S NEW YEAR WISHES.

Come, Kitty, lie still for a minute,
As we sit in the firelight here ;
And if you'll be quiet, I'll tell you
My wishes for this New Year.

I wish for a brand-new dolly,
Like those on the Christmas tree ;
And I wish for another for Polly,
'Cause I musn't be selfish, you see.

At lessons I wish to do better
Than ever I did before ;
I wish I may write my first letter,
And learn—oh, such a lot more !

But I'd rather be good than be clever,
So I wish I may do as I'm told ;
And then I'm quite sure I shall never
Make Nursesey or any one scold.

And I wish—oh, you tiresome Kitty !
Be quiet, or else you shan't hear—
May my story-books all be as pretty,
And have pictures as nice as last year.

And my last is for father and mother
And friends and relations so dear,
And Polly and baby and brother,
I wish them a happy New Year.

THE PERT LITTLE DUCK.

A pert little duckling peeped out of the shell,
And saw that her mother was only a
hen!"

Thought she to herself, "This is all very
well ;
But if I should go to the water!—what
then ?

"And how she does stare at me! stupid old
goose !
Has she never before seen a duckling
like me ?
But her clucking and staring are all of no
use,
For down to the pond in a moment I'll be."

The water lay close by the foot of the hill,
The sunbeams were flecking the surface
with gold ;
While deep in the shadow, so calm and so
still,
The lily-cups floated in beauty untold.

So little Miss Duckie, just shaking her tail,
With a flop and a splash, launched off
from the shore ;

But over the sequel I'd fain draw a veil,
And only remark—she was never seen more!

Next day an old water-rat, pompous and
slow,

Invited his friends to a dinner and tea.

They all of them said that "Of course they
would go ;

For no one could give such a dinner as he."

They sat down to dinner at sound of the
gong,

And the old water-rat carved the food at
his will.

'Twas a little cold duck! and before very
long

They had eaten it all, save the toes and
the bill.

A FAIR LITTLE GIRL.

A fair little girl sat under a tree,
Sewing as long as her eyes could see;
Then smoothed her work and folded it right,
And said, "Dear work! good-night! good-
night!"

Such a number of rooks came over her head,
Crying "Caw! caw!" on their way to bed;
She said as she watched their curious flight,
"Little black things, good-night! good-night!"

The horses neighed, and the oxen lowed,
The sheep's "Bleat! bleat!" came over the
road—

All seeming to say, with a quiet delight,
"Good little girl, good-night! good-night!"

She did not say to the sun good-night,
Though she saw him there, like a ball of
light;

For she knew he had God's time to keep
All over the world, and never could sleep.

The tall pink fox-glove bowed his head,
The violet curtsied and went to bed;

And good little Lucy tied up her hair,
And said on her knees her favorite prayer.

And while on her pillow she softly lay,
She knew nothing more till again it was day,
And all things said to the beautiful sun,
"Good-morning ! good-morning ! our work is
begun !"

THE LITTLE BROWN SPARROW.

A little brown sparrow, contented and gay,
Went hopping about on a cold wintry day
In search of a dinner, of porridge or bread ;
Or, if not to be had, then potatoes instead.
But never an atom of food could she find,
Save morsels of ice, which were not to her
mind.

But what did she see ? Only think ! the old
cat,

So snugly at rest on the kitchen door-mat.
And, close by Miss Pussy a saucer of food,
And, oh, it was tempting, so sweet and so
good !

"Well now," thought the sparrow, "'tis really
vexatious,

That the wicked old cat should have food and
and to spare,

While I am so hungry—I'm really voracious,
And nothing around me, but snow every-
where!

I think I'll just venture a little bit nearer
(The horrid old thing, I feel sure, is asleep);
And really I'd like just to see somewhat
clearer

That food in the saucer—I must have a peep."
So saying, she flew from the left to the right,
And gazed at the saucer with hungry delight,
Till, grown really bold, she advanced with a
hop,

Believing the cat to be "sound as a top."
(But here let me whisper a secret to you,
Puss heard her quite well, and was watching
her, too!)

That night our brown sparrow had promised
.to go

With a friend of her own, on account of the
snow,

Intending together to rest on a tree;
But she never appeared; so, now, where
could she be?

TINY TIM.

There was a little kitten,
His name was Tiny Tim;
He had a dear, kind mother,
And she was fond of him.

She often purred to Tiny—
“From home you must not stray,
For you will surely come to harm
If you should disobey.”

But one day Master Tiny
Thought he would have some fun,
And so he slipped into the street
To take a little run.

Alas! poor Master Tiny
Had scarcely left the door,
When he was chased by naughty boys,
Who hurt him very sore.

Back to the house ran Tiny:
His mother looked quite sad,
And mewed, “You would not have got hurt
If you had not been bad.”

Now, boys and girls, remember
This tale of Tiny Tim ;
If you don't do what you are bid,
You'll come to harm like him.

A WINTER VISITOR.

Ah ! who is this that's coming here,
Hopping across the snow ?
I think, dear Sis, it's somebody
That you and I both know.

He does not seem to heed the cold ;
He is so gaily drest,
He wears a dark and showy coat
Above a bright red vest.

Yes, Sissy dear, he's coming here,
A friend of yours and mine ;
And he is all so trim and neat,
Because he's come to dine.

See, he is tapping on the pane
As if to say "I've come ;
Please spread my dinner on the sill,
And I will peck a crumb."

Yes, Robin dear, your dinner waits,
And you shall welcome be
Each day you choose to come and dine
With Sissy and with me.

Sweet, pretty bird ! when days are cold,
And when the wind grows chill,
Both food and shelter you shall find
Upon our window-sill.

LITTLE RAINDROPS.

Oh, where do you come from,
You little drops of rain,
Pitter-patter, pitter-patter,
Down the window-pane ?

They won't let me walk,
And they won't let me play,
And they won't let me go
Out of doors at all to-day.

They put away my playthings
Because I broke them all,
And then they locked up all my bricks,
And took away my ball.

Tell me, little raindrops,
Is that the way you play,
Pitter-patter, pitter-patter,
All the rainy day?

They say I'm very naughty,
But I've nothing else to do
But sit here at the window;
I should like to play with you.

The little rain-drops cannot speak,
But "Pitter-patter, pat"
Means, "We can play on this side,
Why can't you play on that?"

LITTLE BROWN BUSHY-TAIL.

Little brown Bushy-Tail lived up a tree,
And mossy and snug was his nest;
Acorns and beechnuts in plenty had he,
And he scarcely knew which he liked best.

He was cheery of temper, and agile of limb,
And his own little will was his law;
For what was the world and its worries to
him
When he held a plump nut in his claw?

As he cracked it, he twinkled his knowing
black eyes,
The kernel picked out by and by ;
Then he ate it, and, looking uncommonly
wise,
Said "Folk may be worse off than I.

"For I'm sure I'm content with my portion
of life,
And of nuts I've a plentiful store ;
With my little brown babies, and little
brown wife,
What on earth could a squirrel want
more ?"

He had lots of near neighbors, as merry as
he ;
They were cheery and playful each one :
Don't they show us that happy 'tis easy
to be,
If good humor we keep in our fun ?

Content with the blessings our Father may
give,
How happy would all of us be,
If we tried with our friends and our neigh-
bors to live
As the brown squirrel did in the tree !

POPPIES AMONG THE CORN.

They merrily dance and gaily jaunt
Their scarlet in saucy scorn ;
Heedless of scythe and sickle they flaunt,
The poppies among the corn.

Alas for the death that awaits their pride !
Laid low on the harvest morn,
All withered and dead they are tossed aside,
Cast out from among the corn.

Lo ! a gay little maiden as bright and fair
As though of the August born ;
With a scarlet snood in her shining hair,
Like a poppy among the corn.

Don't live like the poppies, my dear little
maid ;
Their end is a death forlorn,
For gallant and gay though they seem, little
maid,
They are weeds among the corn.

So live, that when dawns eternal day
On the last great harvest morn,
The angel-reapers may bear thee away
To be garnered among God's corn.

A SHARP LESSON.

Edwin is curious ; whatever is nice,
Grasps, without thought, in a minute ;
Once broke a watch, through this mischiev-
ous vice,
Just to see what was in it.

Ransacking cabinets, rummaging shelves ;
Searching all places forbidden—
All that his friends wish to keep to them-
selves
Has to be carefully hidden.

Lately, to reach down a picture deemed rare,
Fetched he a fork from the stable ;
Got on a hassock, and then on a chair,
And then to the top of a table.

Losing his balance, he suddenly fell,
And falling, he broke his right arm ;
Heard you that piercing and terrible yell—
Causing his friends such alarm ?

Often has Edwin—poor, crazy-brained thing,
Slighted each friend and adviser :
Look, here he comes, with his arm in a sling !
Will he, I wonder, be wiser ?

THE TIRED CHILD.

Blue butterfly, on tiny wing,
 Wending on thy lonely way,
Thou art the sweetest little thing
 I've seen for many a day.

'Tis even-time ; across the blue,
 Pale, fleecy cloudlets fly,
I think that God that sunset drew
 From thee, blue butterfly.

My brothers search along the hedge
 For blackberries and sloe,
Or wander on the river's edge,
 And sticks and pebbles throw.

I lie among the waving grass,
 Where lazy parsnip towers,
And hear the little breezes pass
 Among the taller flowers.

Hard by the yellow-hammer sings
 Of bits of cheese and bread ;
The whirr of little flitting wings
 Is round my tired head.

They'll come on tip-toe to my nest,
With merry laugh and food ;
Of all they've found for me the best ;
The world is very good !

SATURDAY NIGHT.

Placing the little hats all in a row,
Ready for church on the morrow, you know ;
Washing wee faces and little black fists,
Getting them ready and fit to be kissed ;
Putting them into clean garments and white,
That is what mothers are doing to-night.*

Spying out holes in the little worn hose ;
Laying by shoes that are worn through the
toes ;

Looking o'er garments so faded and thin ;
Who but a mother knows where to begin ?
Changing a button to make it look right—
That is what mothers are doing to-night.

Calling the little ones all round her chair,
Hearing them lisp their evening prayer,
Telling them stories of Jesus of old,
The Shepherd who gathers the lambs to His
fold ;

Watching them listen with childish delight—
That is what mothers are doing to-night.

Creeping so softly to take a last peep—
Silence the token of childhood's sleep;
Anxious to know if the dear ones are warm;
Tucking the blanket round each little form;
Kissing each little face, rosy and bright—
That is what mothers are doing to-night.

THE OWL AND THE PUSSY-CAT.

The owl and the pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat:
They took some honey and plenty of money
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.
The owl looked up to the moon
And sang to a small guitar,
"Oh lovely pussy, Oh, pussy, my love,
What a beautiful pussy you are—
What a beautiful pussy you are!"

Pussy said to the owl, "You elegant fowl,
How wonderful sweet you sing;
Oh, let us be married—too long we have
tarried—
But what shall we do for a ring?"

They sailed away for a year and a day,
To the land where the palm tree grows,
And there in a wood, a piggy-wig stood,
With a ring in the end of his nose, his
nose.

With a ring in the end of his nose.

“Dear pig, are you willing to sell for one
shilling,

Your ring?” Said the piggy “I will.”
So they took it away, and were married next
day

By the turkey who lives on the hill.
They dined upon mince and slices of quince,
Which they ate with a silver spoon ;
And hand in hand on the edge of the sand,
They danced by the light of the moon,
the moon—

They danced by the light of the moon.

THE LITTLE BIRD.

A little bird with feathers brown,
Sat singing on a tree ;
The song was very soft and low,
But sweet as it could be.

And all the people, passing by,
Looked up to see the bird
That made the sweetest melody
That ever they had heard.

But all the bright eyes looked in vain,
For birdie was so small,
And with a modest, dark brown coat,
He made no show at all.

"Papa, dear," little Gracie said,
"Where can this birdie be?
If I could sing a song like that,
I'd sit where folks could see."

"I hope my little girl will learn
A lesson from that bird,
And try to do what good he can—
Not to be seen but heard.

"This birdie is content to sit
Unnoticed by the way,
And sweetly sing his Maker's praise
From dawn to close of day.

"So live, my child, all through your life
That be it short or long,
Though others may forget your looks,
They'll not forget your song."

DID YOU NOT HEAR THE VILLAGE CLOCK ?

"Up, up," cries the wakeful cock,
"Did you not hear the village clock ?
I have been up for an hour or more,
Crowing aloud at the stable door.
Dobbin has gone with the boy to the plow ;
Betty has started to milk the cow ;
Sure there is plenty for all to do,
And all are up, young friend, but you."

"Up, up," cries the soaring lark,
"Only sleep, my young friends, in the dark.
Oh, let it never, never be said
You wasted the morning hours in bed.
Out of the window glance your eye,
And see how blue is the morning sky.
Open the casement, your slumber spare,
And smell how pure is the morning air."

"Up, up," cries the busy sun,
"Is there no work, little friend, to be done ?
Are there no lessons to learn, I pray,
That you lie dozing the hours away ?
Who would give light to the world below

If I were idly to slumber so?
What would become of the day and corn,
Did I thus waste the precious morn?"

"Up, up," cries the buzzing bee,
"There's work for you as well as for me;
Oh, how I prize the morning hour,
Gathering sweets from the dewy flower;
Quick comes on the scorching noon,
And darksome night will follow soon;
Say, shall it chide for idle hours,
Time unimproved, and wasted powers?"

THE LITTLE RED HEN.

Once a mouse, a frog, and a little red hen
Together kept a house:
The frog was the laziest of frogs,
And lazier still was the mouse.

The work all fell on the little red hen,
Who had to get the wood,
And build the fires, and scrub, and cook,
And sometimes hunt for food.

One day as she went scratching around,
She found a bag of rye—
Said she, "Now who will make some bread?"
Said the lazy mouse, "Not I."

"Nor I," croaked the frog, as he dozed in the shade.

Red hen made no reply,
But flew around with bowl and spoon,
And mixed and stirred the rye.

"Who'll make a fire to bake the bread?"
Said the mouse again, "Not I;"
And, scarcely op'ning his sleepy eyes,
Frog made the same reply.

The little red hen said never a word,
But a roaring fire she made;
And while the bread was baking brown,
"Who'll set the table?" she said.

"Not I," said the sleepy frog, with a yawn;—
"Nor I," said the mouse again.
So the table she set, and the bread put on;
"Who'll eat this bread?" said the hen.

"I will!" cried the frog; and I!" squeaked
the mouse,
As they near the table drew.
"Not much, you won't," said the little red
hen,
And away with the loaf she flew.

UNDER THE SNOW.

What is there going on under the snow ?
Strange things are happening down there, I
know.

"Ha ! ha !" laughs Willy, "and who told you
so ?"

Something is growing there, under the snow,
Under the feathery, powdery snow—
Something for Willy and Lily, I know.

"Ha ! ha ! laughs Willy, "Things growing
below,

Why, down there under the cold, freezing
snow,

All the ground's hard as a rock, that I
know !"

Still it is growing down under the snow,
Swelling and growing, beneath the pure
snow,

Growing for—oh ! the whole world. So I
know.

For I saw the farmer, ere fell the soft snow,
Nourishing, cherishing, beautiful snow,
Lead out the sowers his wheat seed to sow.

Over the fields where now lies the pure snow,
In the brown ridges now covered with snow,
Down dropped the grains in the earth-bed so
low.

Bright summer suns shone, ere came the
chill snow ;

Soft autumn rains fell, before the still snow,
All of them help the seed growing, I know.

Something is going on under the snow ;
Bread, bread is growing there under the
snow !

“Ha ! ha !” laughs Willy. “Why, surely
'tis so.”

MR. NOBODY.

I know a funny little man,
As quiet as a mouse,
Who does the mischief that is done
In everybody's house !
There's no one ever sees his face,
And yet we all agree
That every plate we break was cracked
By Mr. Nobody.

'Tis he who always tears our books,
Who leaves the door ajar ;

He pulls the buttons from our shirts,
And scatters pins afar.
'That squeaking door will always squeak,
For, prithee don't you see,
We leave the oiling to be done
By Mr. Nobody.

He puts damp wood upon the fire,
That kettles cannot boil;
His are the feet that bring in mud,
And all the carpets soil.
The papers always are mislaid,
Who had them last but he?
'There's no one tosses them about
But Mr. Nobody.

The finger-marks upon the door,
By none of us are made;
We never leave the blinds unclosed,
To let the curtains fade.
The ink we never spill, the boots
That lying round you see
Are not our boots; they all belong
To Mr. Nobody.

THE CROW'S NEST.

The crow flew east, the crow flew west,
Seeking a spot to build her nest;
To east, to west, to south, flew she:
She flew to the top of the old pine tree.
"Now here is the place for me," quoth she,
"Right here in the top of this pine tree."

With sticks and straws, whate'er she found,
She built her nest both firm and round,
"My nest within the old pine tree
A noble nest shall be," said she,
"My nest in the top of the tree."
The farmer looked to east, to west,
Seeking to find the old crow's nest.
"The bird that eats my corn for me,
Shall have no nest in my tree," quoth he,
"No nest in the top of my tree."

The little boys ran from all the town
To see the old crow's nest come down.
The farmer climbed, right well climbed he,
Far up in the boughs of the tree climbed he,
Quite up to the top of the tree.
The boughs grew thinner and more thin,
The farmer man was stout of limb;

Up, up he went, and down came he,
All at once from the top of the tree.
The little boys ran to east, to west ;
The crow flew screaming to her nest,
The farmer rubbed his aching knee—
“It may stay for ever, for all of me,
That grewsome nest in the tree,” quoth he,
“That nest in the top of the tree.”

BUSY WORKERS.

Sweet wind, fair wind, where have you been ?
“I’ve been sweeping the cobwebs out of the
sky ;
I’ve been grinding grist in the mill hard by,
I’ve been laughing at work while others sigh :
Let those laugh who win.”

Sweet rain, soft rain, what are you doing ?
“I’m urging the corn to fill out its cells ;
I’m helping the lily to fashion its bells ;
I’m swelling the torrent and brimming the
wells :
Is that worth pursuing ?”

Redbreast, redbreast, what have you done ?
“I have been watching the nest where my
fledgelings lie ;

I've sung them to sleep with a lullaby,
By and by I shall teach them to fly,
Up and away, every one!"

Honey-bee, honey-bee, where are you going?
"To toil for my neighbor as well as myself,
To find out the sweetest flower that grows,
Be it a thistle or be it a rose—
A secret worth the knowing!"

Each content with the work to be done,
Ever the same from sun to sun :
Shall you and I be taught to work
By the bee and the bird that scorn to shirk?
Wind and rain fulfilling His word,
Tell me, was ever a legend heard
Where the wind, commanded to blow, de-
ferred;
Or the rain, that was bidden to fall, de-
murred?

BEWARE!

A gnat on a river was dancing,
A minnow swam slyly about,
A trout had his eye on the minnow,
An angler looked after the trout.

"Oh, dear Master Gnat," said Miss Minnow,
"I love you! why don't you come near?"
"Because," said the gnat, "I have scruples—
You wait for your luncheon, I fear."

"Oh, darling Miss Minnow, I want you—
Come hither, my love!" said the trout.
Said the minnow, "Excuse me, good neighbor,
You want me for dinner, no doubt."

"Oh, fair Mister Trout," said the angler,
"I could see you much better close by!"
"Of course," said the trout; "but, Sir Angler,
You look just a little too sly."

The gnat went on dancing and singing,
The minnow kept wagging her tail,
The trout sailing backward and forward,
The angler was biting his nail.

But the minnow, the trout, and the angler
Continued to coax and allure,
And it is never is safe in temptation
To think ourselves wholly secure.

Of the gnat, all his danger forgetting,
The minnow soon made a good tea;
The trout had the minnow for supper,
The angler walked off with the three.

KATIE'S HOPES.

What will the post bring, mother,
On the morning of Valentine's day,
For Katie and baby brother
As well as for big Cousin May?
She'll get a whole trayful, I know,
Such beauties, all silver and gold,
Like those she got twelve months ago;
But then she's sixteen years old.

And I don't think I wish I was May,
Because, somehow, she seems not to care
One bit about Valentine's day;
I wish it came ten times a year.
Oh! I know just how it will be;
The post will come rather late,
And there'll be a large letter for me,
Addressed in print hand to "Miss Kate."

I shall break the great seal in a hurry,
"What a beauty! do look!" I shall say,
And then I shall wonder and worry
To find out who sent it, all day.
And papa'll say it's not worth a penny,
And laugh at our Valentine's show;
But people who don't get any
Always think they are silly, you know.

Don't tell, it's a secret, dear mother,
But sometimes I fancy I guess
Who sends them to baby brother
And me, with a printed address;
Papa and mamma, can it be?
(I once said I thought so to Jane;)
Ah! my guess isn't wrong, I can see!
But, please send us each one again!

A NUT TO CRACK.

There was an old woman who lived in a hut
About the size of a hickory-nut;
The walls were thick, and the ceiling low,
And seldom outside did the old woman go.

She took no paper, and in no book
Of any sort was she seen to look;
Yet she imagined she knew much more
Than man or woman had known before.

They talked in her hearing of wondrous
things,
Of the dazzling splendor of Eastern kings,
Of mountains covered with ice and snow,
When all the valley lay green below.

They spoke of adventures by sea and land,
Of oceans and seas by a cable spanned,

Of buried treasures ; but though she heard,
She said she didn't believe one word !

And still she lives in her little hut
About the size of a hickory-nut,
At peace with herself, and quite content
With the way in which her days are spent.

Little it troubles her, I suppose,
Because so very little she knows ;
For, keeping her doors and windows shut,
She has shrivelled up in her hickory nut.

And you, my dear, will no wiser grow,
If you rest contented with what you know—
But a pitiful object you will dwell,
Shut up inside your hickory shell.

NEDDY.

The poor old donkey's work is done,
The fragrant hay is now his bed ;
The glory of the setting sun
Lights up his weary, drooping head.

But every teasing sort of thing,
Midges, and gnats, and hungry flies,
With open mouth and thrusting sting,
Have settled on his half-blind eyes.

I'll tell you, Neddy, do not stir ;
I want to whisper in your ear—
The shadow of yon tall Scotch fir
Is really getting very near.

Now let me stroke your poor old face,
As mother does when we are ill ;
I've hit exactly on the place ;
Hush, Neddy, man, be still, be still.

Gently the evening breezes play
About his rough and rusty mane,
The meadow lies all cool and gray,
The western sky is all aflame.

Asleep, I think ; perhaps he dreams
Of friendly games with other Neds ;
Of long, damp grass by icy streams,
The worlds of nodding clover heads.

Oh, dear, who is it comes in sight ?
'Tis nurse's gown and evening cap ;
Poor Ned will sleep too sound to-night
To hear the nursery window tap.

THE CUCKOO.

"Cuckoo!" he says, and flies away;
I would that he would stay.
He's vanished in the heavenly blue;
I would that I'd gone too.

Oh! if you'd only come again,
I'd bring you such a pretty chain
Of half-blown daisies for your neck,
An oxlip for a coronet.

I'd find you such a mossy seat,
And bring a store of cuckoo's meat,
Also a dock-leaf for a dish—
What more could mortal cuckoo wish?

And while with joy you loudly sing,
A salad I would quickly bring
Of all the small green things that spring
Before the summer blossoming.

Then by your side I'd take my place,
And, gazing on your feathered face,
Would ask a question now and then,
Which you would answer back again:

Why, among every other nest,
You love the little wagtail's best?

And why your wife has never tried
To rear her nestlings by her side ?

And why 'tis only in the spring
You know in time and tune to sing ?
In June you say, "Cuck, Cuck, Cuckoo,"
In May both time and tune you knew.

"Cuckoo!" he says, and flies away,
Oh! would that he would stay!
He's vanished in the heavenly blue;
Oh, cuckoo, take me too !

MA'S LITTLE WOMAN.

Little woman ! see, she stands,
Face aglow, and dimpled hands ;
Apron white before her spread,
Dust of flour on curly head.
Busy as the humming-bee,
Grave and thoughtful 'midst her glee,
Helping ma with all her might,
Making cakes and pastry light.

But a secret I will tell,
If you'll never let her know ;
Not much can she really do,
Small results her labors show ;
And if hungry boys, I trow,

Had no better cook than Nelly,
They would surely lacking go.
Tiny cakes, and pots of jelly,
Never could their needs supply,
Without ma's large, substantial pie.

Little woman ! sweeping, scrubbing,
Brushing, dusting, waxing, rubbing.
Broom and bucket bravely wielding,
Spot and stain before her yielding ;
Oh ! a useful child is Nelly,
Though not strong nor very clever ;
Eight years can't do much, you know,
Yet is Nelly willing, ever,
Cheerful smile and blithesome song
Help to spread sunshine about her.

Nelly absent—all is wrong,
Mother cannot do without her !
When the baby frets and cries,
Little Nelly soothes to slumber ;
Freddy's often tearful eyes
She has wiped times without number.
When papa is weak and ill,
Nelly, ever at his side,
While he slept, sat hushed and still,
When he woke, his wants supplied.
Little woman ! sister, brother,
All at home, know how to use her ;

Darling Nell, we often say,
Could we ever bear to lose her?

THE KING AND THE CAKES.

King Alfred was a warrior bold,
A wise and learned wight,
He learned to read at twelve years old,
At twenty he could write.
He went to fight the heathen Danes,
And thought to win renown;
He had his trouble for his pains—
They burnt his palace down.

He went and hid at Athelney,
He led a lonely life;
He humbly served, and faithfully,
A cowherd and his wife.
The dame she was a famous hand
To roast and boil and bake;
And by the fire she made him stand,
A king to mind a cake!

When she went out she told him plain
The cake to mind and turn,
But, thinking how to thrash the Dane,
He left the cake to burn.
How angry was the worthy dame

To find her cake done black ;
She said it was a burning shame,
And bade the king go pack.

He went alone in harper's clothes,
To spy the Danish camp !
He played and sang, and pleased his foes,
They took him for a tramp ;
With twenty thousand fighting men,
He came to Ethandune,
And met the Danes and sang them then
Another kind of tune.

King Alfred rode to Athelney
To see old friends again ;
The cowherd's wife, she now could see
Who he was, very plain.
The poor, good wife was sore distress,
And trembled for her life ;
But Alfred only praised and blest
The cowherd and his wife.

OLD TARTAR.

Old Tartar was a favorite dog,
Sagacious, faithful, true ;
And though he was both wise and good
He had some whimsies too.

If in his master's house he saw
No symptoms of roast meat,
He straightway came to us to know
What we had got to eat.

And after his repast was done,
Back to his home he'd trot;
He always went, when told to go,
Save once—when he would not.

Coaxing and threats alike were vain,
He would not leave the door;
'Twas very odd, he never had
Behaved like this before.

So, wondering much at Tartar's whim,
He was allowed to stay;
The household all retired to rest,
And wrapped in slumber lay.

But in the night his voice was heard,
Most furious was he;
He growled and tore about the house,
What could the matter be?

When morning came, 'twas found a bolt
With crowbar had been bent;
To get into the "counting-house"
Was doubtless the intent.

But Tartar's unsuspected voice
No doubt the robbers scared,
Who surely had an entrance gained
But for our faithful guard.

Say, was it chance that led the dog
On that one night to stay ?
Or Providence, who kept him there
To drive the rogues away ?

AWAY UP IN THE MOUNTAIN.

Away up in the mountain,
A brooklet runs along ;
It sparkles like a fountain,
It sings a merry song ;
It dashes down the hillside,
And then into a pool,
As restless as a schoolboy,
When with his books at school.
Brooklet of the mountain,
Ripple on your way,
Like a sparkling fountain,
Ripple every day.
Ripple, ripple, ripple every day,
Ripple, ripple, ripple every day.
Say, tell us where you come from,

You pretty little brook ;
And tell us where you're going
With such a merry look.
You dance all through the sunshine,
And when the world's asleep ;
Come, tell us all about it ;
The secret we will keep.
Brooklet of the mountain,
Ripple on your way,
Like a sparkling fountain,
Ripple every day.
Ripple, ripple, ripple every day,
Ripple, ripple, ripple every day.

Well, if you will not tell us
Because we are so young,
Come back when we are older,
And sing your sweetest song.
We'll wait for your returning,
We'll leave you with a sigh ;
Oh, brooklet, don't forget us,
Sweet friend, good-by, good-by.
Brooklet of the mountain,
Ripple on your way,
Like a sparkling fountain,
Ripple every day.
Ripple, ripple, ripple every day,
Ripple, ripple, ripple every day.

THE QUARRELSOME KITTENS.

Two little kittens,
One stormy night,
Began to quarrel,
And then to fight.

One had a mouse,
And the other had none;
And that's the way
The quarrel begun.

"I *will* have that mouse,"
Said the biggest cat.
"You'll have that mouse?
We'll see about that!"

"I *will* have that mouse,"
Said the tortoise-shell;
And, spitting and scratching,
On her sister she fell.

The old lady took
The sweeping broom,
And swept them both
Right out of the room.

The ground was covered
Thick with snow,
They had lost the mouse,
And had nowhere to go.

So they lay and shivered
Beside the door
Till the old lady finished
Sweeping the floor.

And then they crept in
As quiet as mice,
All wet with snow
And cold as ice ;

And found it much better,
That stormy night,
To lie by the fire,
Than quarrel and fight.

THE PLAYMATES.

Some little "curs of low degree"
Seem quite unable to agree,
And bark and snarl and bite ;
But noble Trouncer and young Tray
All in good temper join in play,
And gambol with delight.

Some dogs are always quarrelsome ;
No matter who may go or come,
They meet them with a growl ;
And when sweet baby without fear
Tugs at their tail, or pulls their ear,
They run away and howl.

Trouncer and Tray are kind and good,
And children in their merry mood
Ride on them both, astride ;
They seem delighted with their load,
And carry them along the road,
Trotting on side by side.

A dog watched by his master's bed,
And, when he found that he was dead,
Crept closely by his side ;
Followed in silence to his tomb,
And then lay down in mournful gloom
Upon his grave and died.

Few nobler animals we find
Given for the service of mankind,
And none more firm and true ;
Our dog is worthy of our love,
And every day he lives to prove
That kindness is his due.

HELPING THOSE YOU CAN.

Benny is a crippled boy,
Pale and sad and wan ;
Won't you go and cheer him up,
Gladly, if you can ?
In his chair he sadly sits
All the summer day—
Listening, while the other boys
Laugh, and shout and play.

Benny cannot move alone,
Cannot walk or run ;
Never wandered by the brook,
Sparkling in the sun ;
Never sat upon a gate,
Never had a swing ;
Never knew how boys can play
With a knife and string.

Never climbed a leafy tree,
Seeking for a switch ;
Never scrambled through a hedge,
Never jumped a ditch.
Never rode a rocking-horse,
Never learned to slide ;

Never had a tiny ship
Floating on the tide.

There he sits so dull and sad ;
Don't you long to try
If you cannot make him smile
When you pass him by ?
Haven't you a picture book
You could bring and show ?
Tales of wild and sunny lands
Benny likes to know.

Only just a little time
Spared from walk or play,
Benny will remember it
When you are away.
He who is the kindest boy
Makes the greatest man,
Greatness earned in truest sense,
Helping those you can.

LIZZIE AND THE MAY.

It is the very reddest May
That I have ever seen ;
I went to pluck some yesterday,
The iron rails between.

To gain more height I climbed the bank—
For I am rather small—
It really seemed I only sank ;
That May-tree is so tall.

The petals rained upon my head,
Bright rosy red and white,
Though nothing to myself I said,
I nearly cried with spite.

Our Tom came by with rapid stride
To nail a wind-blown peach ;
Said I to him, "I've tried and tried,
But yet I cannot reach."

Said he to me, "Why don't you grow ?"
And took me off the ground ;
A speech which at the time, you know,
Had quite a foolish sound.

He set me down with such a store,
I feared to let it drop ;
So, holding close my pinafore,
I thanked, but could not stop.

I think when one is old and tall,
It is a kindly task
To stoop and lift the weak and small,
Before they've need to ask.

DOWN IN A FIELD.

Down in a field one day in June,
The flowers all bloomed together,
Save one, who tried to hide herself,
And drooped, that pleasant weather.

A robin who had soared too high,
And felt a little lazy,
Was resting near a butter-cup,
Who wished to be a daisy.

For daisies grow so straight and tall ;
She always had a passion
For wearing frills about her neck
In just the daisies' fashion.

And butter-cups must always be
The same old tiresome color,
While daisies dress in gold and white,
Although their gold is duller.

"Dear Robin," said this sad young flower,
"Perhaps you'd not mind trying
To find a nice white frill for me,
Some day when you are flying?"

"You silly thing!" the robin said;

"I think you must be crazy!

I'd rather be my honest self

Than any made-up daisy.

"You're nicer in your own bright gown,

The little children love you;

Be the best butter-cup you can,

And think no flower above you.

"Though swallows leave me out of sight,

We'd better keep our places;

Perhaps the world would all be wrong

With one too many daisies.

"Look bravely up into the sky,

And be content with knowing

That God wished for a butter-cup,

Just here where you are growing."



THE LITTLE BROWN SEED.

"I'm no use," said a little brown seed;

"Where shall I go and hide?

I'm little and brown, with nobody's love,

And ugly beside!"

So she rolled, and she rolled very quickly
away,

And tumbled on the ground;
The rain came in torrents, and fell upon her
And all things around.

And she felt herself sinking in darkness,
Poor little faithless seed!
Where never an eye could see her sad fate,
Oh, she was hidden indeed!

The little brown seed lay still in the earth,
To herself still sighing;
Till at last with an effort she roused up, and
cried,
"I'll begin by trying!"

"I will try and stop fretting, for 'tis of no
use,
And if I've nobody's love,
I will look up in hope, for there's One who
will see—
The dear God above."

Oh, would you believe it? Straightway the
dark ground
Began to tremble and shake,
And make way for the little seed, hopeful
now,
Her upward way to take!

Up, up she went, till at last she saw
The lovely, bright blue sky ;
Oh, the beautiful spirit had found release,
And the summer time was nigh.

The brightness and beauty that grew upon
her,
I cannot begin to speak,
Crowned with flowers she stood, beloved by
all,
So lovely—yet so meek.

POOR SARAH ANN.

They brought her home a week last night,
My lovely Constance Grace ;
With her sweet dress of braided white,
Her waxen hands and face.

I laid her in the long top-drawer,
All safe, when tea began,
And now I sit upon the floor,
Alone with Sarah Ann.

Poor Sarah Ann has worn a train
Since that unlucky day,
When, being left out in the rain,
Her legs were washed away.

And Sarah's gloves are not a pair,
One's pink, the other's red ;
She has no curls, her jet black hair
Is painted on her head.

But do you know, I almost fear,
She must have heard me speak ;
She seems quite downcast, poor old dear,
And looks so low and meek.

Perhaps she can recall the time
When she was still my pet,
Was called, "Verena Caroline,"
And had the bassinet.

And now she's shabby, old, and lame ;
There, Grace will never know,
I'll lay her in the cot again,
And rock her to and fro.

Then, when to-night my prayers are said,
And I have looked at Grace,
I'll push her softly near my bed
In such a cozy place.

Then, in the dark, if she should wake
And feel a little ill,
She yet my stretched-out-hand can take,
And know I'm near her still.

For, really, 'tis but fair, you see,
To love her best of all,
Because she has belonged to me
Since I was young and small.

A CITY BIRD.

He lives upon the sooty wall,
Far down the sooty street,
Where shops and houses large and small
And crooked chimneys meet.

His little head looks wise and bald,
His wings are almost bare ;
His tail—if tail it can be called—
Would make a peacock stare.

All day he hops along the sand
That thinly strews his cage,
As if he had some work on hand,
A thankless pilgrimage !

At night, when busy men run round
To make the city bright,
He nestles closer to the ground
To hide him from the light.

But when the morn dawns damp and chill,
And market cries begin—

He sets about with manful will
To cheer the folks within.

Sharply he whets his frozen beak,
Then looks toward the sky,
As if in linnet speech to seek
A blessing from on high.

'Tis but a feeble little song,
Three notes, a quaver small—
Two chirrups, then a quaver long,
A pause—for that is all.

But in that he hath done his best,
May he kind treatment find!
A friendly perch or two for rest,
Mixed seed to suit his mind.

May sunbeams warm him in his sleep,
The house-tops struggling through,
And here and there 'twixt smoke-wreaths peep
A cheering inch of blue.

May some stray leaf of London pride
Come wafted on the breeze,
Here in his prison to abide
And whisper of green trees.

THE NAUGHTY LITTLE SPIDER.

There was a little spider once, all striped
black and yellow,
Sore tempted to explore a rose—he was a
daring fellow.

His mother said he must not go, for he was
still too small,

Too youthful and too tender yet to wander
from her call;

'Twas better far at home to stay, and dance
the rope so tight,

Than through a rose to thread his way, and
wander out of sight.

His mother dear, he would not hear, the
naughty, willful thing;

He said that to the rose he'd go, and on the
branches swing.

So length'ning out his slender rope, down to
the ground he dropped,

And ran with all his yellow legs, and never
once he stopped;

He scrambled up the thorny stalk, in pleas-
ure and in pride,

Though smarting well with many a prick, in
legs, and breast, and side;

And soon he stands and cleans himself upon
the pretty mound—

The mound of velvet, soft and sleek, which
on the top he found.

A sudden shock, like thunder-stroke, thrills
through the spider's frame;

A rumbling sound is all around—he's sorry
that he came.

'Tis nothing but the husbandman, that comes
to gather here

His golden harvest of fine corn; the spider
need not fear.

"Don't kill me, please!" the spider cries; "I
I did not come to steal,

I only came to take a walk; oh dear! how
bad I feel!"

The husbandman has got his load, and from
the field he goes;

Uncurling then his yellow legs, the spider
soon uprose;

He hastened from that yellow field, and would
have gone straight home,

But no! through many a mazy way, poor
fellow, he must roam. . .

Now all his legs they fly so fast, as down the
stem he speeds;

He only cares to reach his home ; the thorns
 he never heeds ;
And now along the path he goes, his home
 is nearly won,
But stay ! what monstrous thing is that ?
 Alas ! his race is run !
Something he sees that scares him so ; it
 stops him in his race :
A speckled toad, with fishy eye, now stares
 him in the face.
He darted out his slender tongue, and caught
 the little fellow,
And said, ' 'Tis sweet, but very small, this
 spider black and yellow."

HAVE YOU SOLD YOUR MATCHES, TOM ?

Are all your matches sold yet, Tom ?
 Are all your matches done ?
Then let us to the open square,
 And warm us in the sun.
To warm us in the sweet, bright sun,
 To feel his kindling glow ;
For his kind look is the only look
 Of friendship that we know.

Oh, Tom, don't you cry, although the cold
winds blow ;

For the sun is shining bright and warm
In the great square down below.

We'll call the sun our father, Tom,

We'll call the sun our mother ;

We'll call each pleasant little beam

A sister or a brother :

He thinks no shame to kiss us, Tom,

Although we ragged go ;

For his kind looks are the only looks

Of friendship that we know.

Oh, Tom, don't you cry, although the cold
winds blow ;

For the sun is shining bright and warm

In the great square down below.

But, oh, there's One above us, Tom,

Who loves us more than he ;

Who made the great bright sun to shine

With beams so warm and free ;

He is our real Father, Tom,

Although, while here below,

The sun's kind looks are the only looks

Of friendship that we know.

Oh, Tom, don't you cry, although the cold
winds blow ;

For the sun is shining bright and warm
In the great square down below.

We'll tell Him all our sorrows, Tom,
We'll tell Him all our care ;
We'll tell Him where we sleep at night,
We'll tell Him how we fare.
And then, oh, then, to cheer us, Tom,
He'll send His sun to glow ;
For His kind looks are the only looks
Of friendship that we know.
Oh, Tom, don't you cry, although the cold
winds blow ;
For the sun is shining bright and warm
In the great square down below.

KITTY.

Here, and there, and everywhere,
Climbing, running, frisking ;
On the table, in the chair,
Round the parlor whisking,
Kitty seems forever flitting.
Maids and mistress scold and laugh ;
Now she's in the basket sitting ;
Let me take her photograph.

Most important person, Kitty!
Equal to a baby—nearly!
Full of mischief—more's the pity,
Everybody sees that clearly!
See! she's on the parlor table,
Breakfasting on milk and cream—
Steals as much as she is able,
Of the rest she makes a stream.

Scrambling up the window curtain,
To the mantel-piece she leaps;
Down go ornaments, that's certain!
Broken fragments lie in heaps.
Kitty never feels she's sorry—
Never has the slightest shock;
So she dozes free from worry,
Sitting calmly on the clock!

Mrs. Pussy, her dear mother,
Watches her in mute delight;
Wondering at so much bother
With her kit from morn till night.
Kitty plumps on mother's back,
Bites her ears, and pulls her tail,
Gets a scolding and a smack,
But it's all of no avail.

Here, and there, and everywhere,
Kitty scampers through the house;

Mother shows her how to scare,
How to kill a captured mouse.
Up the trees, and on the wall,
Heedless she of all reproof,
Deaf to the maternal squall,
She is playing on the roof!

Oh, Miss Kitty! of to-morrow
Little know you, little care;
Never dream of coming sorrow,
How you may in future fare.
Happy now, and full of frolic,
Only eat and drink and play,
Never suffer gout or colic,
Or meet misery half-way.

MY DOG DRAKE.

Oh, had I only time and space,
Or could I see you face to face,
How many stories I could tell,
That boys and girls would love so well.

But to my story hark!
And you, I think, will say
That dogs do more than bark
And frighten thieves away.

Our household pets can love
Both fondly, fast and true ;
And my dog Drake oft strove
To say, "How I love you !"

When sitting alone and sad,
My faithful dog would try
If he could make me glad,
By saying with his eye :

"Come now and play with me ;
Do, my dear mistress, come !
For, sitting 'neath that tree,
You look so sad and lone."

Then he would see a stick,
And drop it on my knee,
As if to tell how quick
He'd fetch it back to me.

Then, oh, how fast he'd run !
How nimbly spring and bound !
So full of glee and fun,
He'd scarcely touch the ground.

And now I'm left alone,
And these old days are fled ;
My household pet is gone,
My good old Drake is dead !

But I can ne'er forget
His loving, soft brown eye;
And how my dear old pet
To cheer me oft would try.

Even a dog can teach
A lesson unto man—
By gratitude and love,
And doing what he can!

If boys and girls would like to find
The treasure of a happy mind—
Then let them all, like my dog Drake,
Do something for each other's sake.

A NURSERY RHYME.

When Tommy was a little boy
Of three or four years old,
He didn't see the reason why
Boys must do as they're told.

Nurse said that Tommy was "that bold
You never would suppose!"
He wouldn't do what he was told,
But only what he chose.

"Don't go too neat that meadow, nurse!"
His mother said one day;

"Those geese are getting worse and worse,
You'd better keep away."

But Tommy said he meant to go,
Though every one should scold him ;
And cried and kicked and bellowed so,
Nurse was obliged to hold him.

Next morning, with the early light,
Tommy slipped out of bed,
And ran with all his main and might
Down the green lane that led

To the forbidden field, wherein
The geese and goslings wandered.
Old Mother Goose she looked at him,
And just a moment pondered,

Then stretched her neck, and raised her voice
In one tremendous cackle—
As when, against offending boys,
The geese come on to battle.

With lifted head, with stately tread,
With hiss, and quack, and cackle,
The geese, the ganders and goosanders,
Advanced, their foe to tackle.

Then naughty Tommy screamed and cried
Till eyes and face were red,

And wished mamma was at his side,
Or he safe back in bed.

When—yes, it was his nurse's voice
Above the din and clatter—
“I never did hear such a noise,
Whatever is the matter?”

Tom started—rubbed his eyes, and lo!
He only had been dreaming!
“I'm glad,” he said, “I didn't go.”
Said nurse, “How you were screaming!”

Learn! all ye children, young and old,
A truth of golden use—
The child who won't do what he's told
Is nothing but a goose!

LITTLE KITTY.

Alas! little Kitty, do give her your pity!
Had lived seven years and was never called
pretty;
Her hair was bright red, and her eyes were
dull blue,
And her cheeks were so freckled they looked
like the speckled
Wild cowslips which down in the meadow-
lands grew.

If her eyes had been black, if she'd only had
curls,
She had been, so she thought, the most
happy of girls.

Her cousins around her they pouted and
fretted,
But they were all pretty and they were all
petted ;
While poor Kitty, though striving her best
To do her child's duty, not sharing their
beauty,
Was always neglected and never caressed.
All in vain, so she thought, was she loving
and true,
While her hair was bright red, and her eyes
were dull blue.

But one day alone 'mid the clover-blooms
sitting,
She heard a strange sound as of wings round
her flitting,
A light, not of sunbeams, a fragrance more
sweet
Than the winds blowing over the red-blos-
somed clover,
Made her thrill with delight from her head
to her feet ;

And a voice, sweet and rare, whispered low
in the air,
"See that beautiful, beautiful child sitting
there."

Thrice blest little Kitty! she almost looked
pretty,
Beloved by the angels, she needed no pity.
Oh, innocent darlings! with foreheads like
snow,
Bright eyes, sunny tresses, forms made for
caresses ;
There's one thing I'll tell you, 'tis well you
should know,
Though the world is in love with bright eyes
and soft hair,
It is only *good* children the angels call fair.

DOSSIE AND FLOSSIE.

Dossie and Flossie were little twin girls,
With the bluest of eyes and the brownest of
curls ;
With little pink frocks, and pinafores white,
And tongues that would chatter from morn-
ing till night.
Nurse said that they worried her all the long
day ;

She wished that, like good little children,
they'd play
With dollies and tea-things, so pretty and
quiet,
And not, like rough boys, always making a
riot.

Then Dossie and Flossie would shake their
long curls,
And promise that truly they would be good
girls ;
But these two little maidens, alas ! soon for-
got
Their wish to be good, though nursie did not.
Well, somehow it happened, one very wet
day,
They were tired of everything, tired of play,
Tired even of looking at picture-books, too,
And dolefully wondering what they must do.
Mother was poorly, and father was out ;
"There's *nothing* to do !" Dossie said, with a
pout ;
"I wish we were beggars, with little bare feet,
To splash in and out of the pools in the
street.
"To walk through the puddles, with no nurse
to scold,

And not always have to do as we're told!"
Then the two little sisters began to look
 round,
To see whether any good fun could be found.
The nurse was down-stairs, quite out of the
 way;
"Oh, let us play beggars," cried Dossie, "to-
 day!
Not make-believe beggars, but true ones, you
 know,
With real bare feet in the wet streets we'll
 go!"
So off came the stockings and shoes with all
 speed,
For with what Dossie said, Flossie always
 agreed;
Then down stairs they stole, like two little
 mice,
And out into the street they went in a trice.
Splash into the puddles went the four little
 feet;
But it was bitterly cold out there in the
 street!
Not nearly such fun as they thought it would
 be;
Still their spirits were high, and they shouted
 with glee.

Nurse heard the strange sounds ; in a terrible fright,

She came to the door-way, aghast at the sight !

Then she pounced on the culprits, one in each hand,

Spoke to them sternly, in tone of command :

“Come in now, directly ; I’m angry, indeed !

Right into bed you shall go with all speed !”

Then, vainly protesting against such hard fate,

They were hurried up stairs in sorrowful state.

Feet put in hot water, to keep out the cold,

And oh, all the time, how nursie did scold !

Then they very quickly were popped into bed,

With a great many frownings and shakes of the head.

They were told to lie still and go off to sleep,

Not even their noses must out of bed peep.

Oh, how they both grumbled and begged to get up !

But nurse only brought them hot milk in a cup.

She made them drink some, and then left them alone ;

Poor Dossie and Flossie did nothing but
groan ;
Ah ! long they remembered that wearisome
day,
And never again "at beggars " would play.

THE NEST IN THE APPLE-TREE.

Among the branches of a tree,
Where apples hung so ripe and rosy,
Two little birds had built their nest—
They built it soft and warm and cozy.
And in that nest were birdies three,
Their names were Pet and Prim and Posy.
What fun it was, when winds blew loud,
And tossed about their leafy shelter,
To hear the apples plumping down,
And see them rolling, helter-skelter—
And Tom, the farmer's boy, pursue
His sister, and with apples pelt her !
Now, children, you will scarce believe
These little birds could e'er fall out,
And yet I grieve to say they did,
And this was how it came about :
The nest was small, the birds grew fat,
And so they nearly tumbled out.

"Don't crowd me so!" says haughty Prim ;

"I really scarce can draw my breath !"

"Oh, dear ! oh, dear !" cries little Pet,

"You'll surely have me crushed to death ;"

While angry little Posy cried,

"I wish that mother would whip you both."

So loud the hurly-burly grew

As Pet and Prim attacked each other,

That very soon it reached the ears

Of their so kind and watchful mother,

Who said, "Oh, yes, I see 'tis time,

You all must leave the nest together."

And so she, without more ado,

Just tilted up the nest so cozy,

And down they tumbled, every one,

Poor Pet and Prim and little Posy ;

And there they fluttered on the ground,

Among the apples ripe and rosy.

Now Tom, the farmer's boy, had seen

The nest, and often wished he had it,

And would have climbed the apple tree,

Had not his father quite forbade it ;

And Tom knew well he must obey

His father, when he once had said it.

Now Tom, to see them on the ground,

What fun for Tom, and Bessie too !

"Here, Bessie, my girl, just hold your lap,
There's two to me, and one to you."

And with a shout, he rushed about,
When, plump! he tumbled out of view.

"Oh, Tom, the ditch! you'll drown!" cries
Bess;

"Oh, father, come and help him over!"
But Tom himself came scrambling out,
And, dripping, stood upon the clover.

"Oh, Bess, the birds! oh, catch them, Bess,
Before our only chance is over!"

Meanwhile the little birds had felt
A new and very sweet sensation;
They felt that they could fly as well
As any bird in all creation.
So, spreading out their tiny wings,
Away they flew with much elation.

MR. DRAKE AND MRS. DUCK.

Dame Duck, with a toppet upon her head,
Waddles about in an awkward way;
Among the rushes she makes her bed,
And there she goeth her eggs to lay.
Greenish-white, a dozen or more,
She lays and lays, and yet her store

Increaseth not. "Why, how can it be?
Somebody, surely, is robbing me!"
Says Mistress Duck, "Alack! alack!"
And then she gives a mournful quack,
Does puzzled Mrs. Duck.

Mister Drake has a shiny neck,
Purple and green about it play;
His head is glossy, and smooth, and black
As the velvet worn by ladies gay;
The feathers curl up on his stumpy tail,
And his breast seems cased in sable mail;
And he looks like a beau; but his walk, dear
me!
Straddle and waddle, a sight to see
Is the gait of Mr. Drake!

Duck and Drake are a loving pair,
Seldom they quarrel, and never fight;
Together they feed upon delicate fare,
That would turn my stomach, I think,
outright;
Slugs and snails, and slimy things,
Worms that have neither legs nor wings,
With mud for sauce, that I could not touch,
And yet they seem to relish it much,
Do Drake and his fond wife Duck.

Mistress Duck sat down on her eggs,
Which wasn't much trouble for her, you
know,
For really she had the shortest of legs
That ever were seen from a body to grow ;
And she kept them warm for twenty days—
Mr. Drake, I speak to his praise,
Took his fair share of the work, no doubt,
Till twelve little ducklings all came out,
And how proud was Mrs. Duck !

Mistress Duck to the water led
Her little ones, all in a stately row ;
In they went boldly, heels over head ;
Wonderful ! who could have taught them so?
Then she searched in the mud, and they did
the same,
Queer little things, of the color of flame,
Like balls of down, and 'twas pleasant to see
How the old Drake stood admiring ; he
Was a happy father, Drake.

But earthly pleasure is not for long—
The ducklings grew into ducks and drakes,
And onions and sage, although rather strong,
A very nice sauce for duck's flesh makes.
And, when she has company, Mrs. Bond
Is apt to go to the farm-yard pond,

And "Dilly" is called to be killed—alas !
That so sad an ending should come to pass
To the story of Duck and Drake !

MY CHILDREN.

Come and watch my children
At their merry play ;
Bertie, bright and active,
Ethel, blithe and gay.
But of all the playthings
Children ever found !
If you want to see them,
Only look around !
There's a doll—it must be,
Though without a head ;
All its early beauty
Long ago has fled.
There's a stick, which answers
For a horse at times ;
Here's a book in tatters,
Once 'twas full of rhymes.
Now I see the vestige
Of a little cart
Bertie often plays with,
Bless his little heart !

Look you, here's a marble !

Should be nineteen more ;

Where are they, I wonder ;

Perhaps about the floor.

There I see the remnants

Of a Noah's ark ;

Here a dog, I fancy,

But it cannot bark.

Now I see a camel,

And a zebra, too ;

Now a little pussy,

Don't you hear it mew ?

Yonder is a match-box,

Treasured with the rest ;

Here a bird of Ethel's,

But it has no nest.

There I see some ninepins,

Here a bonny shell,

Half-a-dozen pictures,

Buttons, basket, bell.

Screws from father's tool-box,

Faded green rosette,

Here a pretty windmill,

There a wagonette.

Shoes of darling Ethel's,

Now too small become,

Humming-top and whistle,

Broken little drum.
Bells that are sufficient,
I should think, for six;
Here a slate and pencil,
There a box of bricks.
Happy little children,
Merry all the day,
Life to you is pleasant
As a morn in May.
May no evil shadow
All the coming years,
Or your sunny smiling
Change to bitter tears!
Till to glory lifted,
You have gained the shore
Where the saved inherit
Joy for evermore!

THE FOOLISH FROGS.

In a tank at the foot of a hill
Lived Mr. and Mrs. Frog,
At the head of a sparkling rill,
By the side of a queachy bog;
And they had children ten—
All froggies as yellow as gold,
Who loved to play on the fen,
But they often were over bold.

Now it fell out one day,
As it never had done before,
When Father Frog was away
A stickleback sailed to the door.
"Oh! Mrs. Frog," said he,
"Your sister is very ill;
And much she wishes to see
You down at the water-mill."

Then Mother Frog showed her grief
In such tears as you never saw;
And, having no handkerchief,
She wiped her eyes with a paw.
Said she, "Now, froggies dear,
You must not go to the fen:
There is no danger here,
And I'll soon come back again!"

So down the sparkling rill
She paddled her own canoe;
But what she saw at the mill
Is nothing to me or you.
Said her froggies, "Now for some fun—
Let us away to the bog!"
All but her eldest son,
A sensible little frog;

He begged them not to walk
Abroad in the light of the sun;

But they laughed at his earnest talk,
And they were nine to one!
With angry croak and skip,
He stood in the portico;
And he would have cracked his whip,
But he had no whip, you know.

Said he, "I will climb the bank,
Their dangerous pranks to see;
And I'll leap into the tank,
If anything frightens me."
So he sat on a ledge aloft,
And saw his brothers at play,
Till a gnat, with its curfew soft,
Proclaimed the close of the day.

Then a duck, which had lazily swum
For hours in a reedy pool,
Seeing the shadows come,
And feeling the air grow cool,
With a "Quack, quack, quack," came out.
She meant, "It is time to sup!"
So finding the froggies about,
She gobbled them quickly up.

Then the true little frog on the bank
Was so overcome with affright,
That he tumbled into the tank,
And he slept not a wink that night.

Now all wise frogs go out
In the light of the stars and the moon,
When there are no ducks about
To hear them croak and croon.

So Mr. and Mrs. Frog,
By the peeping stars made bold,
Came back by the queachy bog,
To their froggies all yellow as gold.
They never saw them again—
Alas, that it should be so !
They were told not to go to the fen ;
But they did not obey, you know.

THE END.

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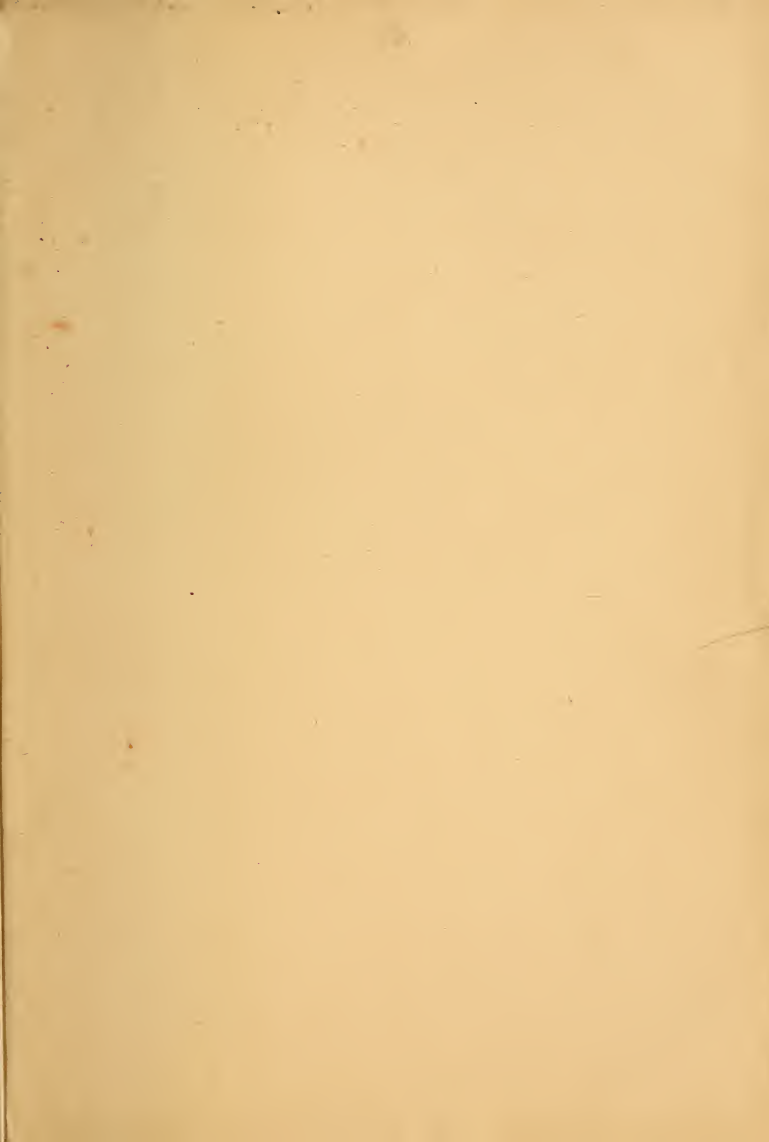
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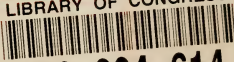
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